THE MARRIAGE AND INTERMARRIAGE
OF BLIND PERSONS
DR. C. F. FRASER

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# THE MARRIAGE AND INTERMARRIAGE OF BLIND PERSONS

By DR. C. F. FRASER

SUPT. HALIFAX SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

(Dr. Fraser has been without sight from early life.)

Taken from Outlook for the Blind, p. 86-87, v. VI, No. 4, Jan. 1913.

EDITOR'S NOTE--Dr. Fraser is about to complete forty years at the head of the Halifax School for the Blind and the results he has obtained command the respect of all workers for the blind. That only one couple from this school should have married is truly remarkable. Few schools can show a better record. Editor Holmes is to be congratulated upon having secured such a sane presentation of a difficult topic.

I have frequently been asked whether blind persons should marry, and whether the intermarriage of those who are deprived of sight is advisable. In my opinion the marriage of a blind man to a woman without sight, or a blind woman to a man without sight, is advisable or inadvisable according to the circumstances. Victims of congenital blindness should not marry. Should they do so they assume a great responsibility in the likelihood of of bringing into the world offspring deprived of sight, a responsibility which I believe no serious minded man would knowingly assume. In considering marriage a man who is blind should be satisfied that he is in a position to support a wife, and in making a choice should be careful to select a woman who will prove a true helpmate.

In the case of a woman who is blind I see no reason why she should not marry, provided that there is no danger of transmitting blindness to her children, and provided that she is able to perform the ordinary duties of the household. I always advise our girls at the Halifax School for the Blind to think seriously before they marry, and not marry at all unless the prospective husband is in a position to support them comfortable. The marriage of two blind persons is always inadvisable. During the past forty-one years there has been but one intermarriage between the graduates of the School for the Blind at Halifax, and in this case the woman had so far recovered her sight as to be able to read ordinary print.

I have always made it a practice to annually address my pupils on the question of marriage and intermarriage. In speaking of the latter I have pointed out that a man who is blind requires a wife with sight and that no blind woman, however capable she may be, can satisfactorily look after the interests of a sightless husband.

No blind woman who will give this matter serious consideration would be willing to impose upon a man without sight a wife who cannot prove a helpmate, who cannot advise his interests, and would in all probability wreck the man's life and jeopardize both his own and her happiness. A man who is blind cannot marry a woman who is blind and be to her all that a husband with sight should be. He should realize apart from his own prospective comfort and happiness that the comfort and happiness of the woman are also to be considered, and that he cannot do for her the hundred and one things that a husband with sight would do. He should realize that her happiness is dependent upon her daily life and that her marriage to a man who is blind makes her very blindness doubly hard to

bear. A manly man would give these matters his earnest consideration. A manly man would hesitate before adding to the woman's handicap of blindness a burden greater than she can bear.

The question of the marriage of blind persons to persons with sight is one which must be settled individually and which, as I have before said, must depend upon circumstances. The question of the intermarriage of the blind is one that should be given careful consideration. The sympathetic affinity between blind persons of opposity sexes may occasionally result in a thoughtless marriage, but good practical common sense should prove strong enough to ultimately discourage all intermarriage between sightless persons. The man who thinks, the true man, will not knowingly destroy the happiness of a blind woman. The woman who thinks, the unselfish woman, the true woman, will never become the wife of a man to whom she cannot prove a helpmate in all respects.

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